



Kiptopeke State Park
35540 Kiptopeke Drive
Cape Charles, VA 23310

Kiptopeke State Park

Master Plan

Executive Summary

2015 Update

Department of Conservation and Recreation
Division of Planning and Recreation Resources
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Kiptopeke State Park

MASTER PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2015 UPDATE

Presented for review at a public meeting on September 4, 2014, then recommended for adoption by the Board of Conservation and Recreation on May 28, 2015, and then reviewed for 30 days by the Virginia General Assembly without comment.

Adopted:

_____/S/_____
Clyde E. Cristman, Director
Department of Conservation and Recreation

August 5, 2015

Date



KIPTOPEKE STATE PARK

MASTER PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Kiptopeke State Park Master Plan Executive Summary is an update to the official unabridged master plan document adopted on March 6, 2001, by Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Director David G. Brickley. There is also a master plan amendment adopted on April 28, 2009, by DCR Director Joseph H. Maroon. This 2015 master plan update is intended to set forth a clear vision for the future based on phased development, and it is the most recent five-year review as prescribed in §10.1-200.1 of the *Code of Virginia*. It outlines the desired future condition for Kiptopeke State Park when it is fully developed.

Kiptopeke State Park consists of some 562 acres and is located in Northampton County, which occupies the southern half of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The park, located between the Chesapeake Bay and U.S. Route 13 approximately 2 miles north of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel and 7 miles south of the town of Cape Charles, was acquired in 1999. Kiptopeke State Park is easily accessible via State Route 704 approximately one-half mile from U.S. Route 13. The park can also be accessed by boat from the Chesapeake Bay. The area surrounding the park can be characterized primarily as rural farmland.

The area is locally known as Kiptopeke Beach. The park's history is traced to the early 1600s when the first English settlers arrived and established relations with the Accawack Indians who inhabited the Eastern Shore. Descendants of the Indians and early settlers still live there today.

In the 1930s, the Virginia Ferry Corporation chartered ferry service from Virginia Beach to the town of Cape Charles. In the 1940s, the corporation relocated its northern terminus to the site, Kiptopeke Beach. The corporation built the pier, terminal building and motel, and platted part of the property for residential development. The ferry terminal was put on-line in 1950 and operated until 1964 when the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel was opened.

The location of Kiptopeke State Park offers recreational access to the Chesapeake Bay with opportunities to explore the unique coastal habitat featuring a major flyway for migratory birds. Recreational opportunities include swimming, camping, picnicking, hiking, pier fishing, and boating, as well as activities related to the bird banding station and hawk observatory.

This 2015 update places value on connecting Kiptopeke State Park to other resources in the community. The park is near Fisherman Island and the Eastern Shore of Virginia national wildlife refuges and Mockhorn Wildlife Management Area. The park is connected to the refuge visitor center by the 2.5-mile Southern Tip Bike and Hike Trail. Several natural area preserves (open by arrangement), Magothy Bay and Picketts Harbor, complement the abundance of natural areas set aside for wildlife along this important stopover for migratory birds. The Eastern Shore Loop of the Virginia Birding and Wildlife Trail connects some of the best wildlife habitat along the eastern shore of the United States. The park fronts the Chesapeake Bay, part of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. Along the Atlantic, the 100-mile long Virginia Seaside Water Trail offers a series of day-use paddling routes that run between the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge at Cape Charles and Chincoteague. Most of route 13 on the state's Eastern Shore is a Virginia Scenic Byway, offering connections to Atlantic Shore beaches to the south and Assateague Island National Seashore to the north. The nearby Town of Cape

Charles has a museum and welcome center, walking tour, public beach and signature golf course. Further north, the county seat of Eastville has the oldest continuous court records in the United States, part of the Eastern Shore Heritage Tour. In Machipongo, the country's only kayak winery tour is offered through Chatham Vineyards, and the Barrier Islands Center interprets the history of former fishing and farming communities.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation Planners and State Park Staff conducted this master plan update in accordance with §10.1-200.1 of the *Code of Virginia*. This plan outlines the desired future condition of the park over a 20-year planning horizon. As required by the *Code of Virginia*, it must be revisited every ten years to ensure that the development objectives outlined in the plan continue to meet the recreational, environmental and historic protection needs of the citizens of the Commonwealth. As a part of the 2015 master plan process, the 2001 park master plan and the 2009 amendment were reviewed. It was determined that significant changes occurred within the master plan and a full revision was warranted. The executive summary and accompanying map have been updated. The phased development plan and costs have been revised to reflect current proposed projects. The park staffing and operations costs data have been also updated to reflect current conditions.

On September 4, 2014, a public meeting was held at Kiptopeke Elementary School to discuss proposed changes to the master plan. Eight citizens attended the meeting to revisit the park purpose statement, goals and objectives, and future park projects and improvements.

Kiptopeke State Park received Federal Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) in 2001 for acquisition of the property. In compliance with the LWCF Act of 1965 and amendments thereto, the Commonwealth of Virginia is required to maintain the park for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity.

The adopted park purpose statement is stated below:

Park Purpose Statement: *“The purpose of Kiptopeke State Park is to provide a variety of recreational opportunities, access to the Chesapeake Bay and Virginia’s Eastern Shore, while preserving the natural communities, native species, and a world-class flyway for migratory birds.”*

Attendance: The following table depicts park attendance during the period 2006 to 2014:

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
275,705	376,456	371,227	378,561	454,479	299,955	305,127	300,211	275,670

Economic Impact: In 2014, Kiptopeke had 275,670 visitors: 64,000 were overnight visitors, while 211,670 were day- use visitors. With this level of visitation, it is estimated that the park had an economic impact on the local economy of approximately \$8,186,720. Master plan recommendations designed to increase visitation and improve the visitor experience, once implemented, should have a further positive impact on the region's economic vitality.

This 2015 master plan update represents both new facilities and improvements to existing facilities. New facilities at this park should be designed and built in keeping with the prescriptive management areas as defined by the Park Resource Management Plan and the

guidelines of the Park Visitor Experience Plan, if and when available. To the greatest extent possible, Virginia State Parks strives to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards. All future phases of park construction will be developed in an environmentally sensitive manner. Building and site design will implement green energy standards using energy-efficient and sustainable materials and process to the greatest extent possible. These facilities will be carefully sited to minimize impacts to the views within the park and of the park from adjacent lands and water bodies. Development activities will comply with requirements set forth by the Department of Environmental Quality's best management practices for erosion, sediment control and stormwater management in order to protect water quality.

Completion of all of the projects in this list will represent total build-out (completion of the master plan), and will cover a 20-year timeframe. The phasing costs are based on 2015 estimates. **The total cost to bring Kiptopeke State Park to its desired future condition is \$33,188,271.**

Phase I

- Analyze breakwater to extend the jetty vs. moving the boat launch
- Breakwater stabilization study (concrete ships)
- Renovate beach bathhouse
- Upgrade fish cleaning station
- Add climate controlled storage facility
- Remove rental RVs and replace with campsites
- Upgrade campground
- Add five yurts
- Construct bathhouse #1 for RV site
- Upgrade existing amphitheater
- Redesign and construct visitor center area
 - construct visitor center near hawk observatory
 - play area
 - upgrade large shelters 1 and 2
 - Parking for shelters 1, 2 and the visitor center
- Upgrade internal park roads
- Replace pump well controls and update the water system
- Connect proposed trail to Baywoods and Mockingbird trails
- Improve beach access or beach accessibility
- Study boat launch potential site
- Redesign boat launch parking

The total estimated cost for Phase I development is \$21,327,069.

Phase II

- Construct staff residence
- Upgrade bunkhouse
- Construct seasonal staff residences
- Upgrade Texas Avenue
- Replace bathhouse #2

- Upgrade accessible trail near Taylor Pond
- Accessible fishing with pier
- Archery range
- Hike-in camping for access to southern end of property

The total estimated cost for Phase II development is \$3,999,364.

Phase III

- VDOT redesign park entrance at Route 13-Northampton Bike Trail access and safe Route 13 bike trail crossing
- Construct environmental education center
- Upgrade maintenance and storage near Taylor Pond

The total estimated cost for Phase III development is \$7,861,838.

The total cost to bring Kiptopeke State Park to its desired future condition is \$33,188,271.

Staffing and Operations

Staffing and operational costs at Kiptopeke State Park are presently budgeted at \$789,000 annually, including salaries for four staff positions. Four additional staff positions are identified in Phase 1 that are either vacant positions or are needed to bring current park staffing to the standard base level. At complete build-out of the proposed three phases of development, seven additional staff will be needed and an additional \$571,000 in operating funds. In order for the park to operate effectively and efficiently at full build-out, the park must be provided with the projected staffing and operating costs for the three development phases. The total budget for Kiptopeke at full build-out is projected to be \$1,360,000 with 11 staff positions.

KIPTOPEKE STAFFING AND OPERATING COSTS

EXISTING (FY 15)	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	FULL BUILD OUT
STAFFING				STAFFING
Park Manager				Park Manager
Asst. Park Mgr				Asst. Park Mgr
	Chief Ranger*		Chief Ranger	Chief Ranger (2)
	Educ. Specialist*			Educ. Specialist
Park Ranger	Park Ranger(2)*		Park Ranger	Park Ranger (4)
	Housekeeper			Housekeeper
Office Manager				Office Manager
SALARY TOTAL				SALARY TOTAL
\$296,000	\$254,000		\$104,000	\$654,000
WAGE TOTAL				WAGE TOTAL
\$190,000	\$32,000	\$5,000	\$49,000	\$276,000
OTPS TOTAL				OTPS TOTAL
\$303,000	\$80,000	\$16,000	\$31,000	\$430,000
TOTAL BUDGET (FY15 dollars)				TOTAL BUDGET (FY15 dollars)
\$789,000	\$366,000	\$21,000	\$184,000	\$1,360,000

NOTE – All costs (salary, wage, OTPS (Other than Personnel Services)) are based on FY15 budget projections.

* Additional positions which are vacant and/or will bring park to standard base level staffing.

